

null  
Carol X Weakley 09/22/2006 03:09:55 PM From DB/Inbox: Carol X Weakley

Cable  
Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 03784

SIPDIS  
CXTela:

ACTION: POL  
INFO: CONS IPSC PD IMO RES ECON DCM DAO AMB AID ADM  
RSO

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:RHJONES  
DRAFTED: POL:SCROWLEY  
CLEARED: DCM:GCRETZ, POL:PV/MK, DAO:TWILLIAMSON/RO, ECON:RR

VZCZCTVI642  
OO RUEHC RUEHKK RHEHNSC RUEKJCS RUEKJCS  
DE RUEHTV #3784/01 2641534  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 211534Z SEP 06  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6520  
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 003784

SIPDIS

PENTAGON FOR OSD/ISRAEL DESK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/21/2016  
TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [PARM](#) [ASEC](#) [LE](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: ISRAELI MOD ON LEBANON WITHDRAWAL, OVERFLIGHTS,  
AND U.S.-ORIGIN WEAPONS

REF: BEIRUT 3002 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones for reasons 1.4 (B and D).

1. (C) Summary: Amos Gilad, the director of the military-political division at the Israeli Ministry of Defense, told the Ambassador September 21 that Israeli forces would need another one-to-three weeks to complete their withdrawal from Lebanon. He stressed that this delay is for purely technical reasons; the GOI's decision to withdraw remains unchanged. Gilad praised the IDF's "excellent" cooperation with UNIFIL and Lebanon, and assured the Ambassador that the withdrawal is being fully coordinated with both. The Ambassador raised IDF seizures of U.S.-origin weapons and ammunition from a Lebanese Joint Security Force barracks (reftel) and urged the GOI to avoid any steps that might impinge upon the security of the Presidential delegation visiting Lebanon on September 22. The Ambassador and Gilad also discussed China, arms transfers to Venezuela, and implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access (septels). Gilad was joined by MOD Political Adviser Haggai Alon, MOD Senior Adviser Baruch Spiegel, and other officials.  
End summary.

-----  
IDF Withdrawal Proceeding Smoothly;  
Could take up to Three Weeks  
-----

2. (C) The Ambassador asked about reports that IDF Chief of Staff LTG Halutz had announced a delay in the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. Gilad reassured him that the political decision to remove all Israeli troops from Lebanon

remains unchanged. Defense Minister Peretz and Halutz had hoped to complete the withdrawal prior to the Jewish New Year (beginning on September 22), he added, but "technical matters" have delayed the final withdrawal for one-to-three weeks. He said that UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) require additional time to organize liaison and logistics for the hand-over of remaining territory to them. Gilad claimed that all IDF withdrawals are being "fully coordinated with the Lebanese." The IDF has experienced "no problems" working with UNIFIL and the LAF, he said, and "the whole process is proceeding smoothly." Note: The IDF told DAO that they are also pleased with the level of cooperation but are not yet satisfied with the liaison mechanism currently in place with the LAF and UNIFIL. End note.

13. (C) Gilad said that he expects the cease-fire to hold because Hizballah is concentrating its efforts on reconstruction. He expressed more concern about the long-term stability of the Golan Heights, which he believes may experience problems in 2007 following recent statements by Syrian President Asad. Gilad stressed that Israel's immediate concern is to prevent resupply of Hizballah across the Syrian-Lebanese border and -- to a lesser extent -- to ensure that the strengthening of the LAF proceeds in accordance with Israeli (and Lebanese) interests. He was unaware of any major resupply effort for Hizballah at this time, but claimed that some weapons are being sent through Turkey to Syria for transshipment to Lebanon (NFI).

-----  
Overflights to Continue - for now  
-----

14. (C) The Ambassador noted that Israeli overflights of Lebanese territory have been criticized by the UNSYG and remain a problem for the Siniora government. Gilad replied that "overflights will continue" due to their intelligence value and because the UN forces have not fully deployed. The Ambassador urged all sides to think creatively to find a solution that would meet Israel's security needs without requiring such flights. Gilad said he would do so, adding "in the future it will stop, I'm sure."

-----  
GOI Seizure of Weapons from JSF in Lebanon  
-----

15. (C) The Ambassador asked about IDF seizures of U.S.-origin weapons and ammunition from the Lebanese Joint Security Force barracks in Marjayoun during the recent conflict (reftel). Uncertain of the facts surrounding the seizure, Gilad conferred with Alon before asking "we didn't give them back?" The Ambassador mentioned that the Defense Attache's office had provided the IDF with details of the missing U.S.-origin equipment; Gilad asked that this information also be relayed to the political side of the MOD.

-----  
Safety of U.S. Presidential Delegation in Lebanon  
-----

16. (C) The Ambassador noted that a Presidential delegation consisting of U.S. business leaders will arrive in Lebanon on the evening of September 22. He urged the GOI to avoid any steps that might endanger the safety of these visitors. Gilad replied, "there is no reason you cannot trust us." He also volunteered to inform Israeli security agencies of the delegation's plans.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

You can also access this site through the State Department's Classified SIPRNET website.

\*\*\*\*\*  
JONES